

D R A F T RESOLUTION

Stewardship of creation and practice of justice/equity by implementing carbon offset program

Resolved, that following Bishop Brown's decision to offset all Loring House-related air travel this policy cover the entire Diocese.

Resolved, that this measure inspire individual and collective engagement by Maine Episcopalians to do justice and love kindness towards human and non-human neighbors and to Earth by choosing alternatives to air travel whenever possible.

Resolved, that when air travel cannot be avoided, a carbon offset fee be paid to a Fund established and managed by the Diocese.

Resolved, that said Fund be used to support Diocesan-related create care/climate justice initiatives that reduce carbon emissions.

Explanation:

- Scripture teaches that the created world is good (Genesis 1); that it does not belong to humans but to God (Psalm 24:1); and that God cares about the fate of all creatures (Luke 12:6).
- Increased carbon emissions associated with human-produced industrial development have contributed mightily to an [increase in Earth's average temperatures](#) the past two centuries.
- The Rev. Jim Antal asserts in [Climate Church, Climate World](#) that “[b]ecause Christians regard God as Creator, the church must proclaim God’s love for creation and work to stop humanity from running Genesis in reverse.”
- Air travel’s energy intensiveness means that it has [a disproportionately large impact on Earth’s atmosphere](#).
- Air travel is also [generally a luxury of the rich world](#) even though climate change’s effects are more severe [where the majority of people are poor](#).
- The COVID-19 pandemic has unexpectedly shown how [people can adapt lives and livelihoods to avoid traveling](#) and how [emissions reductions produce good effects quickly](#).
- The proposed Diocesan fund would work in this fashion:
 - Individuals and/or Diocesan groups planning to take air flights would estimate their carbon emissions (using a calculator such as [Cool Effect](#); the International Civil Aviation Organization’s [Carbon Emissions Calculator](#); Virgin Atlantic’s [Carbon Calculator](#) or [Terra Pass](#)) and contribute the requisite sum to the newly-established fund.
 - As funds accumulate, parishes throughout the Diocese could apply for small grants that would support some sort of creation care/climate justice initiative in their church and/or civic community.

- This grant program could be modeled on the Diocese's New Initiatives Fund and Mission Priorities grant programs.
- Grant reviewers could be selected from around the Diocese with the entire process being conducted online/remotely if necessary. Site visits by members of the review team would be encouraged.

Additional resources for Inspiration

[San Francisco Carbon Fund](#)

[Episcopal Diocese of Olympia Washington Carbon Offset Cooperative Mission](#)

[Blessed Tomorrow Carbon Offset Program](#)¹

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¹ Funds collected go to Cool Effect (see above).